

Learning English with CBC Calgary

Weekly newscast

September 12, 2014

Lessons prepared by Amie Sondheim & Justine Light

Objectives of the weekly newscast lesson

- to develop listening skills at the CLB 4 level
- to increase vocabulary among learners
- to increase knowledge of news stories
- to provide a self-study tool, as well as, an ESL classroom resource



www.alberta.ca

<http://www.cbc.ca/calgary/learning-english/>

News story #1 An Early Winter Brings Destruction

How do you think snow could cause damage to a city? This first story is about how an early snow-fall in Alberta has caused a lot of problems for many people in Calgary last week.

Before you listen to the first news story, complete this vocabulary activity. This will help you understand the listening better.

Vocabulary

Match the vocabulary words to the appropriate synonyms. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Words in the story	Answer	Related words
sudden		a) no power; gone away
utility		b) a stick with leaves; a large twig
restore		c) to hit; to bump
outage		d) quick; unexpected
branch		e) to bring back; to make better
debris		f) a public service - e.g. telephone or electricity
knock		g) the remains; broken bits

Extra definitions to help you understand the reading:

Enmax – an energy corporation (big business)

power lines – the lines that electric power runs along

laden – to be weighed down; to be carrying or holding a heavy load

Listening Activity: Matching – Match the columns according to how the subject affects the object.
Answers are in the appendix.

Subject of statement	Matching letter (a,b,c,d,e)	Object of statement
1. The heavy, wet snow		a) have been working on bringing the power back to many neighbourhoods.
2. Enmax and the fire department		b) were without power and in the dark for hours in some Calgary schools.
3. Mayor Nenshi		c) caused many tree branches to fall onto the power lines and into the streets in Calgary.
4. Students		d) are working hard to clear the debris .
5. Calgary workers		e) requested the help from the people of Calgary to save the trees by getting the snow off the branches.

Discussion:

How has weather in your home country caused destruction in the past? Have you noticed the weather patterns becoming more extreme around the world? What do you think is the cause of destructive weather?

News story #2 Electronic Fare Card... Coming Soon!

Do you use cash, or credit cards when you buy things? Would you put money onto a card that would give you access to the bus and facilities around the city, such as libraries and swimming pools? This second story is about Calgary's transit system working on getting an electronic fare card working so the public can use it for accessing such things.

Before you listen to the second news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

Match the vocabulary to the correct definition. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Answer	Words	Definition
	electronic	a) the price paid to travel by bus, taxi, plane, train, etc.
	take two	b) to stop something that was originally planned from happening
	cancel	c) the location of something; the place something happens
	fare	d) business deal – an exchange between two or more people
	ultimate	e) tools, machines, or appliances that are run on electricity
	transaction	f) the end result or goal of a long process
	site	g) to do something for the second time

Extra definitions to help you understand the reading:

“Back to the drawing board” – back to the beginning

“Re-loadable card” – a card that you can put more money on it

Listening Activity: past, present, or future?

Listen and check off whether these events are from the past, present or future. Careful, all the events are written in simple present in this activity, but that does not mean that they are all in simple present in the story. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Events from the story	Past	Present	Future
1. The project gets tested			
2. The project gets cancelled			
3. Televent recreates the fare card			
4. Calgary employees test the electronic card			
5. Doug Morgan says the card must work before letting the public use it			
6. The fare card is used to access sites like, swimming pools			
7. The reloadable card is used to access sites, like libraries			

Discussion Question:

How has technology improved our lives? Which technology do you think you could not live without? Has technology also caused some problems for people? Describe the negative effects technology has had on society.

News story #3 Memorial Fundraiser

Do you remember the shocking murders of 5 university students at a party in Calgary last spring? This next story is about a fundraiser that was put on to raise money in honour of those 5 victims.

Before you listen to the third news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

Use the words below to complete the sentences. *Answers are in the appendix.*

scholarships (money given to good students)	concert (live music show)
organizers (people who put things in order)	raise (to make money)
donation (money given by people for a cause)	stab (to seriously cut with a knife)
memorial (an event held in memory of someone/thing)	raffle (tickets for sale to raise money)

Extra definitions to help you understand the reading:

trust fund - money that is held in trust for someone until they turn a certain age

house party - a party held at someone's house

1. The _____ of the event bought many t-shirts to sell at the fundraiser.
2. The five victims were _____ to death at the party last spring.
3. If you believe in a certain cause and you have extra money, you should make a _____.
4. I got good grades in high school and earned a _____ for university!
5. We had such a great time at the _____ tonight; the music was fantastic!
6. I went to my uncle's _____ last night; it was very sad.
7. Are you going to buy tickets for the _____?
8. By selling all of the t-shirts and raffle tickets we were able to _____ so much money!

Now listen to the third news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: True and False

Decide whether the statements below are **true (T)** or **false (F)**. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. _____ Nearly 14,000 dollars was raised at the memorial concert.
2. _____ 16, 000 dollar was raised in Internet ticket sales.
3. _____ There was far less money made selling raffle tickets, t-shirts and through donations than with the ticket sales.
4. _____ The money raised is going to be used for scholarships.
5. _____ About 50 hundred people were at the memorial concert.
6. _____ The memorial concert was a success because it raised so much money.

Discussion: Do you donate to any causes? Which ones? If you could give \$10,000 to a good cause, which one would it be? Why? Why do you think people create memorial funds in memory of those who have died?

Language Focus: Nouns- plurals (adding “s”)

Many language learners forget to add an “s”, or “es” onto plural nouns. The use of numbers in sentences often helps people identify when to add an “s” or not.

For example: “*The heavy wet snow...brought down hundreds of tree branches.*” The number ‘hundreds’ tells us to add an “s” onto branch.

However, there are many times where there will not be a number in the sentence and so it becomes more difficult to decide whether to add an “s”. It helps to think about the statement that is being made; ask yourself, ‘would this statement apply to just one item (singular), or would it make more sense to have it apply to more than one item (plural)?’

For example: “*Calgary Mayor Naheed Nenshi asked Calgarians to help save snow-laden trees by knocking the snow off their branches.*” There is not a number here that tells us to pluralize the nouns, but we can assume the Mayor would ask more than one Calgarian to help clear more than one tree, which would have more than one branch; and so plural “s” has been added to each of these nouns.

Look at these sentences from the stories this week. The plural “s” has been taken off each plural noun and you have to decide which nouns should become pluralized. Answers are in appendix.

1. Power outage were reported in several Calgary neighbourhood.
2. All the snow also caused problem at some Calgary school.
3. Student spent hour in the dark with no heat.
4. Calgary Transit employee are now testing the card.
5. Morgan says the ultimate plan is to use the re-loadable card for transaction at other city service site like swimming pool and library.
6. Organizer say last Thursday's concert raised 16-thousand dollar through on-line ticket sale.
7. They raised another 23-thousand that night on raffle, t-shirt and donation.
8. The money will go to scholarship and trust fund in the name of the five student who were stabbed to death last spring at an end of class house party.

Transcripts of Weekly news stories

	SEPTEMBER 12 TH WEEKLY NEWS STORIES	TIME
Introduction	Hi, I'm Rosa Marchitelli. You're listening to Learning English with CBC for the week of September 12 th .	0:00
Story 1	The heavy wet snow that brought Calgary's summer to a sudden end this week brought down hundreds of tree branches onto power lines and roadways around the city. The power utility Enmax and the fire department have been busy clearing branches and restoring power to many neighbourhoods. Calgary Mayor, Naheed Nenshi, asked Calgarians to help save snow-laden trees by knocking the snow off their branches. Power outages were reported in several Calgary neighbourhoods. The Northwest areas were hardest hit. All the snow also caused problems at some Calgary schools. Students spent hours in the dark with no heat. The city is working to clear debris caused by the snow.	0:10
Story 2	It's "take two" for Calgary Transit's electronic fare card. It tried testing the Connect Card in 2012, but the project was cancelled when the company Telvent, that was responsible for it, couldn't make it work. Telvent went back to the drawing board last year, and Calgary Transit employees are now testing the card. Transit's general manager, Doug Morgan, says they want to see the card work for 90 days before putting it into public use. Morgan says the ultimate plan is to use the re-loadable card for transactions at other city service sites like swimming pools and libraries.	1:04
Story 3	A memorial concert for five murdered young Calgarians raised nearly 40-thousand dollars. Organizers say last Thursday's concert raised 16-thousand dollars through on-line ticket sales. It raised another 23-thousand that night on raffles, t-shirts and donations. The money will go to scholarships and trust funds in the names of the five students who were stabbed to death last spring at an "end of classes" house party. About 15-hundred people were at the concert in honour of Zachariah Rathwell, Joshua Hunter, Lawrence Hong, Jordan Segura and Kaiti Perras.	1:52

Answer keys

News story 1

Vocabulary:

Words in the story	Answer	Related words
sudden	d	a) no power; gone away
utility	f	b) a stick with leaves; a large twig
restore	e	c) to hit; to bump
outage	a	d) quick; unexpected
branch	b	e) to bring back; to make better
debris	g	f) a public service - e.g. telephone or electricity
knock	c	g) the remains; broken bits

Listening:

Subject of statement	Matching letter (a,b,c,d,e)	Object of statement
1. The heavy, wet snow	c	a) has been working on bringing the power back to many neighbourhoods
2. Enmax and the fire department	a	b) were without power and in the dark for hours in some Calgary schools
3. Mayor Nenshi	e	c) caused many tree branches to fall onto the power lines and into the streets in Calgary
4. Students	b	d) are working hard to clear the debris
5. Calgary workers	d	e) requested the help from the people of Calgary to save the trees by getting the snow off the branches

News story 2

Vocabulary:

Answer	Words	Definition
e	electronic	a) the price paid to travel by bus, taxi, plane, train, etc.
g	take two	b) to stop something that was originally planned from happening
b	cancel	c) the location of something; place of an event
	fare	d) business deal – an exchange between two or more people

f	ultimate	e) tools, machines, or appliances that are run on electricity
d	transaction	f) the end result or goal of a long process
c	site	g) a phrase that means “ to do something for the second time”

Listening:

<i>Events from the story</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Future</i>
1. The project gets tested	X		
2. The project gets cancelled	X		
3. Televent recreates the fare card	X		
4. Calgary employees test the electronic card		X	
5. Doug Morgan says the card must work before letting the public use it		X	
6. The reloadable card is used to access swimming pools			X
7. The reloadable card is used to access libraries			X

News story 3

Vocabulary:

1. The **organizers** of the event bought many t-shirts to sell at the fundraiser.
2. The five victims were **stabbed** to death at the party last spring.
3. If you believe in a certain cause and you have extra money, you should make a **donation**.
4. I got good grades in high school and earned a **scholarship** for university!
5. We had such a great time at the **concert** tonight; the music was fantastic!
6. I went to my uncle's **memorial** last night; it was very sad.
7. Are you going to buy tickets for the **raffle**?
8. By selling all of the t-shirts and raffle tickets we were able to **raise** so much money!

Listening:

1. **F** Nearly 14,000 dollars was raised at the memorial concert.
2. **T** 16, 000 dollar was raised in Internet ticket sales.
3. **F** There was far less money made selling raffle tickets, t-shirts and through donations than with the ticket sales.
4. **T** The money raised is going to be used for scholarships.
5. **F** About 50 hundred people were at the memorial concert.
6. **T** The memorial concert was a success because it raised so much money.

Language focus: Nouns - Plurals (adding s)

1. Power **outages** were reported in several Calgary **neighbourhoods**.
2. All the snow also caused **problems** at some Calgary **schools**.
3. **Students** spent **hours** in the dark with no heat.
4. Calgary Transit **employees** are now testing the card.
5. Morgan says the ultimate plan is to use the re-loadable card for **transactions** at other city service **sites** like swimming **pools** and **libraries**.
6. **Organizers** say last Thursday's concert raised 16-thousand **dollars** through on-line ticket **sales**.
7. They raised another 23-thousand that night on **raffles**, **t-shirts** and **donations**.
8. The money will go to **scholarships** and **trust funds** in the **names** of the five **students** who were stabbed to death last spring at an end of **classes** house party.